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## **MIAMI METRO PARTICIPATES IN NATIONWIDE DISCUSSION ON HEALTH CARE**

*Citizens' recommendations to be considered by Congress, White House*

**Washington, D.C.** – The Miami metropolitan area will participate in a dialogue on health care in America presented by the Citizens' Health Care Working Group. The community meeting will be held on **Thursday, March 9, 2006**, from 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm at Grand Bay - Coconut Grove, 2669 South Bayshore Drive, Miami, FL 33133. The meeting is free and open to the public, but registration is requested. Registration is available at [www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov).

"As the reader of any newspaper in the state will know, health care costs and accessibility are major issues in Florida. I invite the citizens of Miami to join me in this unique process designed to document our opinions, stated Florida resident and Working Group Member Montye Conlan. "Let's bring all voices from every neighborhood in Miami together to send a clear message to Congress that we need an affordable and accessible health care system that works for all Americans."

The community meeting will feature a multimedia presentation that provides information on the nation's health care system including problems related to cost, quality, and access to care. This will be followed by more focused discussions in small groups. Participants will share their ideas about how to improve the health care system.

Community members, especially those unable to come to the meeting are urged to take advantage of several important online features designed to overcome physical and practical barriers to citizen participation. The Public Comment Center, Citizens' Blogs, and Discussion Forums, are found at [www.citizenshealthcare.gov](http://www.citizenshealthcare.gov). They are all ways to enable a more inclusive public comment and debate so that citizens can share their opinions with one another and make their views known to the Working Group in order to strengthen the recommendations provided to the President and Congress.

The Citizens' Health Care Working Group, a nonpartisan group authorized by the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act of 2003, is charged with listening to the views of the American people and developing recommendations for the President and Congress to provide U.S. citizens with "Health Care that Works for All Americans." The *Health Report to the American People*, was released in October and serves as a basis to engage the American people in a dialogue on health care access, cost and quality issues. The Working Group consists of 15 members --14 citizens of diverse backgrounds from across the country, and the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

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